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REPORT

OF THE

Committee on Arts and Sciences,

ON

COMMUNICATION FROM HIS HONOR THE MAYOR,

RECOMMENDING THE PURCHASE OF

Hubard's Duplicate Copy

OF THE

STATUE OF WASHINGTON,

BY HOUDON.

NEW YORK:
CHARLES W. BAKER, PRINTER, 25 BEEKMAN STREET.
1860.

With respects of Henry B. Dawson

REPORT

OF THE

Committee on Arts and Sciences.

The Committee on Arts and Sciences, to whom was referred the accompanying communication from his Honor the Mayor, transmitting a copy of the memorial of W. J. Hubard, who possesses a duplicate copy of the statue of Washington, by Houdon, taken from life, and which he proposes should be placed in some suitable position in this city, respectfully

REPORT:

That the proposition of Mr. Hubard, to dispose of a duplicate copy of the statue of Washington, taken from the original of Houdon, to this city, in order that, by such means and through the indorsement of this city of its resemblance to the great original, it might become the standard for the image of the Nation's Father, was received with much favor by your Committee. The importance of securing to ourselves and posterity a perfect delineation of the form and features of the immortal Washington, was sensibly impressed upon the minds of your Committee, and they determined to obtain from Mr.

Hubard the statue in his possession, if, upon examination, it was found to be as represented, a faithful and reliable copy, from the cast of Washington's person, taken by Houdon, and Mr. Hubard was directed to produce the proofs in his possession necessary to convince your Committee of its authenticity and reliability. Accordingly Mr. Hubard in person appeared before your Committee, and exhibited to them copies of original letters, written by Washington himself, Franklin, Jefferson and the artist Houdon, all relating to the original cast made from the person of Washington, while the papers necessary were produced under the seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and from the Hon. Joseph Mayo, Mayor of Richmond, demonstrating the fact, to the entire satisfaction of the Committee, that Mr. Hubard by legislative enactment was secured the exclusive right or privilege of duplicating Houdon's original.

Your Committee propose, in order to prevent the possibility of a doubt existing in the public mind, and to allay any cavil that might arise among artists, or those claiming already to be in possession of authentic copies of Washington, differing in almost every essential particular, from the statue by Houdon, to enter at length into a statement of the facts and historical reminiscences connected with the statue of Houdon. The circumstances connected with the making of this statue are as follows:—At the close of the war, Congress passed a resolution, requiring an equestrian statue to be made in honor of General Washington. No appropriation was made, and the subject was abandoned. No sooner, however, than the legislature of Virginia was convened, than a resolution was unanimously

passed, requiring his image to be made in the purest marble, and by the most eminent sculptor of Europe. The sum of one thousand guineas was appropriated, and the commission assigned to Jefferson and Franklin. The very inadequate appropriation for such a work was made rather in ignorance, than from any desire to limit the glory of the monument. Doubtless the impoverished condition of the state had much to do with this apparent under-estimate of a high class of sculpture A warrant issued for the first instalment will give some idea of the circumscribed means of the Treasury.

WARRANT TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, ESQ.

Saturday Oct. 30, 1784.

"Out of the first money that shall arise, under the law for recruiting the State's quota of men in the Continental army, for the purpose of procuring a statue of General Washington.

"£550 sterling. "By order of the Executive."

When Jefferson joined Franklin, who was then in Paris, and consulted with him and several illustrious personages, connected with the Court, who promptly suggested that the task should be given to Houdon, they found, however, the amount placed at their disposal was barely the half of the value of such a work. The Commissioners hesitated, therefore, in offering the work to Houdon. They did, however, do so, in obedience to their instructions. To their infinite surprise, Houdon replied, "It would be the glory of his life to be enabled to place his name hum-

bly upon the plinth of a statue representing that good and great man."

No sooner had this noble artist committed himself, than he became aware of the difficulty he would encounter, in seeking to be released from several important engagements with several European Governments. The one which caused him most concern was with the Empress of Russia, who expressed surprise that so great an artist should relinquish honors and fortune, to risk his life in crossing an ocean "to make the statue of a Colonial rebel."

The Executive of Virginia had caused a copy of a full-length portrait, by C. W. Peale, to be sent as material for the statue. Houdon rejected all idea of relying upon any such slender guide, and told Jefferson it would be absolutely necessary for him to see the great Washington himself. This surprised and delighted the Commission, although it involved an additional expense, which was only considered in connection with their very limited means.

To obviate this difficulty, they wrote to Adams in London, asking the Life of Houdon to be insured during his absence. This was happily effected, and Houdon sailed with Franklin, from England, on the 27th of July, 1785, and arrived in Philadelphia on the 14th of September of the same year.

Jefferson had written to the Executive, respecting Houdon's determination to visit America, and, in return, was warmly congratulated on having effected so desirable a negotiation. He wrote to Washington, also, the following letter:

TO GEN. WASHINGTON FROM JEFFERSON.

"PARIS, July 10, 1785.

"DEAR SIR:—Mr. Houdon would much sooner have had the honor of attending you, but for a spell of sickness, which long induced us to despair of his recovery, and from which he is but recently recovered. He comes now, for the purpose of lending the aid of his art to transmit you to posterity. He is without rivalship in it, being employed from all parts of Europe, in whatever is capital. He has had a difficulty to withdraw himself from an order of the Empress of Russia—a difficulty, however, that arose from a desire to show her respect, but which never gave him a moment's hesitation about his present voyage, which he considers as promising the brightest chapter of his history. I have spoken of him as an artist only; but I can assure you, also, that as a man, he is disinterested, generous, candid, and panting after glory—in every circumstance meriting your good opinion. He will have need to see you much, while he shall have the honor of being with you, which you can the more freely admit, as his eminence and merit give him admission into genteel society here." * * * * *

In writing to the Governor at the same time, he said Houdon had acceded to their terms, although he was confident he would be a considerable loser; Jefferson wrote, also, to the Virginia delegates in Congress, urging upon them to bring up the subject of the equestrian statue; he reminded them of the glory of having the work done by so great an artist: one "that was entirely without rivalship."

When Franklin and Houdon arrived in Philadelphia, Washington wrote the following letter:

GEN. WASHINGTON TO BENJ. FRANKLIN.

"MOUNT VERNON. Sept. 26, 1785.

"When it suits Mr. Houdon to come hither, I will accommodate him in the best manner I am able, and shall endeavor to make his stay as agreeable as I can." * * *

FROM WASHINGTON TO HOUDON.

"MOUNT VERNON, Sept. 26, 1785.

"SIR:—By letter, which I have lately had the honor to receive from Doctor Franklin, at Philadelphia, I am informed of your arrival at that place. Many letters from very respectable characters in France, as well as the Doctor's, inform me of the occasion, for which, though the cause is not of my own seeking, I feel the most agreeable and grateful sensations. I wish the object of your mission had been more worthy of the masterly genius of the first statuary in Europe, for thus are you represented to me.

"It will give me pleasure, sir, to welcome you to this seat of my retirement; and whatsoever I have or can procure, that is necessary to your purpose, or convenient to your wishes, you must freely command, as inclination to oblige you will be among the last things in which I shall be found deficient, either on your arrival or during your stay."

FROM WASHINGTON TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

"MOUNT VERNON, Sept. 26, 1785.

"* * * * I shall take great pleasure in showing Mr. Houdon every civility and attention in my power, during his stay in this country, for I feel myself under personal obligations to you and Dr. Franklin (as the State of Virginia has done me the honor to direct a statue to be erected to my memory), for having placed the execution in the hands of so eminent an artist and so worthy a character." * * * *

Washington received Houdon at Mount Vernon with great distinction and cordiality. The artist's admiration on beholding his subject, exceeded all anticipation, which he afterwards expressed to Jefferson, saying, that it was well he went, for although he had conceived the great patriot to be an imposing personage, he had no idea of the grandeur of his form, features and presence. He solicited Washington to submit to having plaster casts taken of his head and whole person, which was at first refused with great repugnance, yet so completely did Houdon win the regard of his illustrious host, that he finally replied, "Do with me as you please: I can refuse you nothing." The scrupulously modest Washington did permit himself to be laid nude upon a table, and buried in plaster from head to foot; the sculptor remarking, after the operation, that he would transmit him just as he was, for he was too grand an object, and too glorious a character to trust to the dictation of art, or the embellishments of fancy. In packing

up the moulds, he separated those of the head, determining to take them in his own charge, which excited some surprise; and in reply to the question as to his motive, he said, "If they are lost in the ocean, I am determined to perish with them." He preceded his assistants by a more expeditious conveyance, and arrived in Paris, January 22, 1786.

Previous to leaving Mount Vernon, he made a clay bust, by forcing the material into his mould, which obliged the transfer to be accurate. He simply regulated the surface, and imparted to the features the expression he treasured during familiar intercourse with his distinguished host. He presented to Washington a similar bust, as a testimony of his regard and gratitude for the marked hospitality and kindness he had received.

Jefferson, in speaking of Houdon's method, remarked, that he built up the statue perfectly nude, which was evidenced from the closely-defined and characteristic anatomy. Jefferson, still later, spoke of his surprise that Houdon should have hit upon an attitude so strikingly individual —one that he had seen Washington assume on all important occasions. He considered the whole figure so truthful, that he would recognize each part separately.

Washington, in writing to the Marquis De Lafayette, said: "I have now to thank you for your favors of the 9th and 11th of July: the first by Mr. Houdon, who staid no more than a fortnight with me, and to whom, for his trouble and risk in crossing the seas (although I had no agency in the business), I feel myself under personal obligations." * * *

A correspondence occurred, respecting the dress, which is contained in the following letters:

FROM JEFFERSON TO WASHINGTON.

"PARIS, 4th January, 1786.

"I have been honored with your letter of September the 26th, which was delivered to me by Mr. Houdon, who is safely returned. He has brought with him the moulds of the face only, having left the other parts of his work with his workmen, to come by some other conveyance.

"Dr. Franklin, who was joined with me in the superintendence of this just monument, having left us before what is called the costume of the statue was decided on, I cannot so well satisfy myself, and I am persuaded I should not so well satisfy the world, as by consulting your own wish or inclination as to this article. Permit me, therefore, to ask you, whether there is any particular dress, or any particular attitude, which you would rather wish to be adopted? I shall take singular pleasure in having your own idea executed, if you will be so good as to make it known to me."

FROM WASHINGTON TO JEFFERSON.

"MOUNT VERNON, 1st August, 1786.

"In answer to your obliging inquiries, respecting the dress and attitude which I would wish to have given to the statue in question, I have only to observe, that not having sufficient knowledge in the art of sculpture to oppose my judgment to the taste of connoisseurs, I do not desire to dictate in the matter; on the contrary, I should even scarcely have ventured to suggest, that perhaps a

servile adherence to the garb of antiquity might not be altogether so expedient, as some little deviation *in favor of the modern* costume, if I had not learnt from Colonel Humphreys, that this was a circumstance hinted in conversation by Mr. West to Mr. Houdon. The taste, which has been introduced in painting by West, I understand, is received with applause, and prevails extensively."

FROM JEFFERSON TO WASHINGTON.

"PARIS, 14th August, 1787.

"I was happy to find the letter of August 1st, 1786, which you did me the honor to write me, that *modern dress for your statue, would meet your approbation.* I found it strongly the sentiment of West, Copley, Trumbull and Brown, in London; after which, it would be ridiculous to add that it was my own."

Houdon no sooner saw Washington, than he settled this question of costume himself; yet, he was obliged to defer to the judgment of the Commissioners before he felt at liberty to press his own views. The discussion which took place in London, originated in the wording of the resolution of Congress for the equestrian statue, which required Washington "*to be represented in a Roman dress, holding a truncheon in his right hand, and his head encircled in a laurel wreath.*"

In confirmation of Houdon's intention regarding the dress, he had taken casts of Washington's watch seals, spurs, and even walking-stick, which are minutely represented in the statue. It will not be inapposite to state the singular coincidence, that when the artist engaged in the duplication of the Houdon statue, com-

menced strenuous efforts to enlist public attention to the subject of the isolated authenticity of the likeness, the two seals—one gold and the other silver—were simultaneously found in different sections of the State, after being lost for many years. One of these seals was ploughed out of the ground.

Houdon objected to the length of the inscription designed for the pedestal.

JEFFERSON TO MADISON.

"PARIS, February 8, 1786.

"Houdon has returned. He called on me the other day to remonstrate against the inscription for General Washington's statue. He says it is too long to be put on the pedestal. I told him I was not at liberty to permit any alteration, but would represent his objections to a friend, who could judge of its validity, and whether a change could be authorized." * * * *

The sculptor did not put the inscription upon the pedestal, but sent the blank block of marble, and placed, simply, "George Washington" upon the plinth, or ground upon which the feet of the statue stand. This inscription, in sentiment, is a just and beautiful tribute—yet, it is too much of the tomb-stone order, to be connected with a statue which speaks its own history, and needs no epitaph, because it represents an immortal moral, and the actual life.

The statue progressed with great rapidity, and Houdon worked with the concentrated sanguineness of a prophet; for this labor of enthusiasm admitted of no distraction of attention, and his whole soul was absorbed with the

glorious idea of his name descending to posterity in connection with that of the "Father of Human Freedom."

The statue was completed, and erected in the State-house of Virginia, in 1788, but the inscription, which was written by Madison, upon his knee, during the proceedings of the resolution, was not placed upon the pedestal until 1814.

The education and career of Houdon, differed very materially from his cotemporaries, particularly from those who made likenesses of Washington. His studies were pursued with an earnestness and devotion that enabled him to master every intricate branch of fine art. No intoxicating passions, no frivolous propensities or vagrant fickleness of taste diverted his attention from the noble path he had determined to pursue. He continued a severe student throughout a long life; and although he made no demonstration in favor of the revolutionary movements in his own country, he admired enthusiastically the character of Washington, and sympathized fully with the republican sentiment of the American colonists.

Disgusted with the physical and foppish art of France, he went at an early age to Rome, where he soon forgot vulgar conventionalities, in studying the beauties of nature and the classic works of Ancient Greece. He soon became an object of universal interest, and before he left Italy, the Pontiff secured two of his finest works—one of St. John, and one of St. Bruno—to place in proud association with the genius of antiquity. These works alone attest how many precious efforts of his fine genius must have perished by the hands of the brutal iconoclasts of the French Revolution.

Houdon's style was entirely new to northern Europe. He had abandoned the masquerading and mock fantastic fashion which had degraded refinement and art taste to bombast and sensuality. He discarded the voluptuous attitudes and gorgeous robing peculiar to the day of Louis XIV., which was vitiated by the depravity of the court of Louis XV. Houdon was about twenty-eight years old when Louis XVI. ascended the throne. This monarch, though amiable and moral, was too carelessly educated, and was too indolent to strike at the root of the evils established by his infamous predecessor, who, by his dissolute and corrupt examples, had vitiated the taste and habits of the aristocracy surrounding the throne. His profligacy extended to the Church, even with which, and the tyranny of the crown, and the bankruptcy of the government, the intelligent and middling classes of society were utterly disgusted. The common masses, like caged beasts, scenting carnage, growled, and shook their famished heads. Literature, likewise, had assumed a licentiousness destructive of moral and religious restraint. The gaudy taste of "Louis the Great," had lost its only captivating imposture, luxurious beauty, and graceful elegance of deportment,—so that the bawd, disrobed of her coquettish propriety, rendered art a lascivious veil, or debauching mask for every description of vice. Fortunately, Houdon saw but little of this era, not having long returned from Italy, when the tomb closed over the incubus of royalty. Notwithstanding his grandson had, in a measure, disinfected the court of its moral pestilence, the corruption was too deeply rooted in the heart of the aristocracy to effect more than a superficial reform. The philosophers, a formidable junto, talked too plainly, and advocated too forcibly, the

subversion of priestcraft, and superstitious reverence, for the multitude not to perceive they had been the victims of the vilest tyranny. The hydras of the mass saw the timidity of the King, and the vacillating weakness of the ministry, and boldly raved about the liberty in America. Louis XVI. sympathized with the colonists, and applauded their effort to throw off the yoke of England; the enemy of France, little thinking the rejoicings this rebellion sent forth were ringing his own death-knell.

One year after the erection of Houdon's statue of Washington, which was cut out of a block of marble, quarried for an image of the reigning Bourbon, the Bastile fell into the hands of the people, and with its downfall crumbled the thrones of French Kings.

Houdon, who ardently approved the revolutionists of America, and gave the most enthusiastic evidence of his admiration of Washington, withdrew from public notice, and shunned all participations of fellowship with the Republicans of his own country. He saw too plainly that a hellish spirit was let loose, and that blood and anarchy would subvert the patriotism of the nation. It was far different with many of his distinguished cotemporaries, both sculptors and painters, many of whom flocked around the red flag, joined in the butchery of the aristocracy, and the murder of the royal family.

The fine arts, in the proper acceptation of the term, shared the fate of the throne. Indeed, their degradation was complete in the reign of Louis XV., and it was only during a few years of his grandson's prosperity, that they showed the least prospect of a revival. Houdon's pure taste and refined character, exerted considerable influence

in the schools, and he it was who first broke through the fantastic and allegorical styles, to give place to the study of the Greek classics, and the chaste portraiture of the beauties of Nature.

Houdon was remarkable for the graceful delicacy of his females, and the ennobling characteristics and expression of his male statues. His rule of modeling his figures entirely nude, and draping them when his anatomy was perfect, rendered the charming traits of form conspicuous, the whole contour symmetrical, and his drapery gracefully subservient to the undulating outline of the figure. His facility in composition, his vivacity of conception, and his extraordinary power for individualizing, gave to his statues that truth and unity which made them counterparts of the originals, and beautiful versions of art and nature. In reviewing the magnificent era of the Grand Empire, when Italy, Spain, and Germany were plundered to adorn Paris, it seems remarkable that French art remained at so low an ebb; for artists were munificently encouraged, yet their work partook either of the brutality of the Reign of Terror, the coarseness of the arena, the extravagance of the drama, or the formal lifelessness of gorgeous or sepulchral architecture. David was the master-painter, and had been one of the bloody judges. The sculptors were, very many of them, of the same stamp, and the only improvement they evinced, was in their drawing and close imitations of antique statuary. Canova was fascinated by the dazzling greatness of Napoleon, who induced him to leave his sunny and poetical Italy, to accept a splendid studio in Paris; but his noble soul sickened in its physical atmosphere, and after a few months' endurance of disgust,

solicited permission to return to his native land; and, as he says of himself, he did not draw a happy breath or inspiration, until he saw the southern side of the Alpine range.

It is easy to understand why Houdon remained in retirement—not, however, in obscurity, for his name was familiar and beloved wherever learning and pure taste were cherished. His happy domestic relations attached him to France, and had much to do with his seclusion. The greater number of his fine works disappeared during the Reign of Terror, and the shock to his moral sense was so great, that he permitted the heroism of the new fraternity to overshadow his modest aspirations. He continued a hard student, through life, and left many evidences of his scientific acquirements, his accomplishments as a member of society, and his admirable individuality of character. Houdon's anatomical statue not only contributed to the founding the modern school of drawing and sculpture, but it has been adopted by the most eminent anatomists for "the rules of proportion for the human body." He was a member of the Institute, and a knight of the Legion of Honor. He died in 1828.

Your Committee have thus faintly endeavored to impress upon the minds of the Common Council, a just appreciation of the commanding genius and ability of the only artist that was ever permitted such intimate association with Washington, as to finally succeed in inducing that great and good man to submit his person to the unpleasant process of having plaster casts taken from his entire figure, in a state of nudity, in order to transmit to posterity a faithful delineation of the commanding form

and features of the "Father of Human Liberty," as well as to commemorate the disinterestedness of the man in abandoning many undertakings, or to speak more correctly, engagements, made with patrons occupying the most exalted positions in the governments of the most powerful nations of Europe—engagements calculated to increase his already firmly-established reputation as an artist, and to add materially to his pecuniary advantage, in order to engage in an undertaking at once hazardous and unprofitable, but in keeping with his exalted ideas of patriotism and virtue. Such motives could actuate none other than an artist, having the greatest reverence and affection for the subject of his future labors, the desire of having his name associated with that of Washington—which your Committee have endeavored to gratify, being the only recompense he desired or sought—a sufficient guarantee itself that such a self-imposed undertaking, solely from respect for the great original, would receive the undivided care and circumspection necessary to transmit unimpaired the very form and feature of the man he reverenced, to succeeding generations.

That he has succeeded, your Committee are satisfied will be universally conceded; and it now only remains for them to produce the authority given by the state of Virginia for the erection of the statue, together with the exclusive right, given Mr. W. J. Hubard, to duplicate the Houdon statue, in order to prevent the desecration practised by artists of a more recent period, in re-producing delineations of Washington.

The following is the resolution, passed by the Legislature of Virginia:

"The initiatory steps taken, and final action of the Legislature, relative to the erection of the monument to Washington:

"*Journal of the House, Saturday, May 15th*, 1784.

"*Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to draw up an address to his Excellency, General Washington, expressive of the thanks and gratitude of the House of Delegates, for his unremitted zeal and services in the cause of liberty, congratulating him on his return to his native county, and the exalted pleasures of domestic life.

"Committee appointed:—Messrs. Ronald, Mann, Page, Hubard, Madison, Henry, Tazewell, Heath, Reau, Taylor of Caroline, Cary and Corbin.

"*Ordered*, That it be an instruction to the same Committee, to consider and report *what* further measures may be necessary for perpetuating the gratitude and veneration of his country to General Washington. * * *

"*Resolved*, That the Executive be requested to take measures for procuring a statue of General Washington, to be of the finest marble, and best workmanship, with the following inscription on its pedestal, viz:—'The General Assembly, of the Commonwealth of Virginia, have caused this statue to be erected, as a monument of affection and gratitude to George Washington, who, uniting to the endowments of the hero, the virtue of the patriot, and exerting both in establishing the liberties of his country, has rendered his name dear to his fellow-citizens, and given to the world an immortal example of true glory.' Done in the year of Christ, and in the year of the Commonwealth." * * * * * * *

From the following, it will be seen that W. J. Hubard Esq., the present memorialist, is duly authorized, for a limited period, to duplicate Houdon's statue of Washington, made pursuant to the preceding resolves.

"EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, RICHMOND, VA.,
"March 15th, 1860.

"I, George W. Munford, Secretary of the Commonwealth, of the state of Virginia, do hereby certify and make known, that W. J. Hubard has had, by authority of an act of the General Assembly of the state of Virginia, the exclusive right, for a limited period, to take casts from the original statue of Washington, by Houdon, now in the capital of the state; that he has made several casts in bronze from the same mould; that one of these casts has been purchased by the state, for the Virginia Military Institute, and is located at that institution, and is deemed to be a fac-simile of the original, and casts taken from the same mould may be relied on as authentic representations of Washington's statue here.

"Given under my hand, the day and year aforesaid.

"GEORGE W. MUNFORD,
Secretary of the Committee of Virginia"

"Virginia, to wit:

"I, John Letcher, Governor of the State aforesaid, do hereby certify and make known, unto all whom it may concern, that George W. Munford, whose name is subscribed to the certificate annexed, is, and was, at the time of signing the same, the Secretary of the Commonwealth of the State of Virginia, duly appointed and qualified,

and that to all his official acts, full faith, credit, and authority, are due, and ought to be given."

"In testimony whereof, I have subscribed my name, and caused the great seal of the State to be affixed hereunto. Done at the city of [L. S.] Richmond, the fifteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty, and of the Commonwealth the eighty-fourth.

"JOHN LETCHER.

"By the Governor,

GEO. W. MUNFORD,

Secretary of the Commonwealth."

The statue of Washington, by Houdon, illustrates the incident so emphatic in his history—the resignation of his authority as Commander-in-Chief of the army: It indicates the act as already performed. The figure stands in majestic repose, the head slightly elevated, and the eye calmly gazing at an elevated object far distant. The whole countenance expresses tranquillity of mind, and a soul at peace with the man. The rods, or fasces, represent the thirteen states, and the spear-headed arrows the means of war; the band of peace binds them together in equal power. (There is an arrow to each State.) Upon this emblem of the confederacy, Washington reclines his sword and military mantle, and his hand resting open upon them, shows that he has resigned all official authority into the hands of the nation he has covered with glory. The right hand, holding the cane of the civilian, expresses that he has become a simple citizen, and the plough in the rear indicates his future career to be that of his heart—

the cultivation of the earth. The yet gloved hand shows that he has but just resigned his commission.

Mr. Custis, a short time before his death, stated, that he vividly recollected the process of Houdon's taking moulds from Washington's head and figure. He was about five years old when this occurred. He was in pursuit of his foster-father, when, entering a room, he saw him lying upon a table, covered with a sheet, and some persons doing something to the feet. He was transfixed to the spot in mysterious fear, nor could he be taken away. He described his emotions as terribly intense with apprehension; that he remained throughout the process, and it so constantly revived in his mind as to become a haunting superstition. He said that no incident in his life was so constantly and vividly present as this extraordinary operation.

The most flattering evidence of the resemblance of the statue to the original, and in which, perhaps unconsciously, a high and merited compliment was paid the great artist, fell from the lips of Lafayette, when he last visited this country. His first request was to be shown some representation of his dear friend. He shook his head at the picture of Stuart; he was then shown Trumbull's, and at once said that brought him to mind; but when he stood before the statue by Houdon, he remained mute, and gazed upon it till the tears flowed from his eyes, and at last said, with quivering lip and deep emotion, "that is the man himself: I can almost realize he is going to move."

The Hon. Joseph Mayo, Mayor of the city of Richmond, Virginia, in a letter addressed to the Clerk of the Common Council of this city, for presentation to your

Committee, in speaking of the statue, says: "There can be no doubt, whatever, that this statue is the most authentic representation of Washington in existence. It was made from casts of Washington's head and whole person. I have been familiar with this statue from boyhood, and have frequently conversed with contemporaries, who survived the illustrious patriot, and who I have heard say, it *was the life itself*. The Legislature of this state, by an act, gave to Mr. Hubard the sole right to cast from the original statue; I have seen several of his bronze casts, which I do not hesitate to say are, in my opinion, fac-similes of the original."

The price originally named for the statue, by Mr. Hubard, was twelve thousand dollars, and from the investigations made by your Committee, they are satisfied that that sum would only be a fair remuneration. They find it impossible to complete such a statue in less than a year, requiring very expensive labor, and the constant care and supervision of the artist. The exceeding hardness of the metal, the great complication of the statue, and the great risk in casting, from its being in one entire cast, makes it nearly doubly expensive. The object of the hardness of the metal is, to secure permanency of color, and perfect durability of the material. Casting it whole, is to secure perfect exactness in the duplication, and to make it a thoroughly artistic work, instead of a mere foundry production. Profit, however, is not the object of Mr. Hubard, in devoting so much time and untiring energy and perseverance to the work in which he is engaged. A far higher and nobler motive actuates him in redeeming from mutilation, and preventing any further desecration of the loved form and features of the great original. Mr.

Hubard has consented to dispose of the statue in question to the city of New York, after incurring the risk, and paying the cost of transportation, together with many incidental expenses, for a sum similar to that paid him for a like work by the state of Virginia, at his foundry in Richmond, viz: ten thousand dollars; an amount which Mr. Hubard positively declares, and your Committee firmly believe, will not repay the first cost of the work; his anxiety to have the indorsement of the city of New York, the great metropolis of commerce and art, by adopting this statue as the standard image of Washington's appearance, by reason of which the whole world would approach it with confidence and reverence, induces him to place upon his work, in this instance, the lowest possible price

Your Committee, in conclusion, respectfully but earnestly urge upon the Common Council the importance of securing, at this time the statue of Washington, from the original of Houdon, now in the possession of Mr. Hubard. An opportunity like the present will never again, in all probability, occur and we should be recreant to our trusts, did we permit this one to pass, of securing to our citizens and strangers a "shrine for the virtuous politician, the lover of liberty, and the devotee of the Union; for in the presence of this statue, there would be the realization of the actual man, and the mind would readily infuse into it the sublime spirit of the Nation's Father."

The following resolution is, therefore, respectfully offered for your adoption:

Resolved, That the Street Commissioner be, and he is

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